

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 20, 23, 25, 36, and 39 are pending in this case. Claims 20, 23, 25, and 36 are amended; Claim 39 is added; and Claims 21, 22, 24, 26, and 27, and non-elected Claims 1-19, 28-35, 37, and 38 are canceled by the present amendment. Changes to Amended Claims 20, 23, 25, and 36 and the addition of New Claim 39 are supported in the originally-filed disclosure at least by originally-filed Claims 20, 22, 23, and 24. Thus, no new matter is added.

The outstanding Office Action rejected Claims 20-24, 26, and 27 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Toshihiko, et al. (JP 07-020637) and indicated Claims 24, 25, and 36 as allowable.¹

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication of allowability for Claims 24, 25, and 36.

Claims 21, 22, 26, and 27 are canceled. Thus, the rejection of those claims is moot.

Claim 20 is amended to incorporate the subject matter of Claim 22 and Claim 24, which was indicated as allowable. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) of Claim 20 and Claim 23, which depends therefrom, be withdrawn.

Claims 25 and 36, which were indicated as allowable, are rewritten in independent form as suggested by the outstanding Office Action.

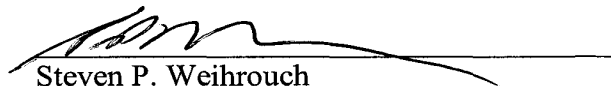
New Claim 39 depends from Claim 25, which was indicated as allowable.

¹ Although Claim 24 is listed at item 6 on page 3 of the outstanding Office Action among the claims rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), that inclusion appears to be erroneous because Claim 24 is not discussed among the rejected claims but is, instead, included with the claims indicated as allowable at page 4 of the outstanding Office Action.

Accordingly, because the pending claims incorporate or depend from Claims that were indicated as including allowable subject matter, the pending claims are believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is, therefore, respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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